

Course Syllabus

Course Number/Title/Date Taught:

STMM 503 Theology in an Ecumenical Context
Summer, 2008

Professor Contact Information

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Course Description

This course invites students to approach theology from an ecumenical perspective. It includes an overview of the major denominational traditions within the Christian Church and an introduction to interfaith dialogue. The course explores the work of the modern ecumenical movement to overcome divisions among and within churches and to make more visible the god-given unity of the church through dialogue, advocacy, and action for the common good. Students learn through readings, discussion, papers and interaction with one another and faculty.

General Course Objectives

By the end of this class, in your final paper as well as in your class discussions you will demonstrate these abilities/skills in **theological studies**:

exhibit your ability to use a consistent methodology in your theologizing process especially as you articulate your own theology of ecumenism.

display your *awareness of the effects of history and culture on theological development by presenting the historical development and theological underpinnings of your own tradition's participation in ecumenism.*

demonstrate your competence in the understanding and expression of your own faith tradition's understanding of ecumenism through research, written expression and discussion with other faith traditions.

increase your ability *to read critically in the areas of ecumenism and to develop the habit of reflection on this reading to gain new insights.*

Methodology/Pedagogy

Lecture/class discussion
Small group discussions
Research in theological studies

Specific Course Requirements

To be successful in this course you will need to complete all the reading assignments, be prepared to share the fruits of your reading and participate actively in the class

discussion. There will be two written assignments. Your grade will depend both on content and on timely submission. Any absences must be made up with a 3 page paper on the material covered in that class. **You will also need to participate in some event/religious experience in a tradition other than your own. It would be beneficial for you to do this prior to the beginning of the class. You need only to visit and learn.**

Grading/Classroom Assessment (grade is dependent on both the completion and the quality of the work)

Two written Theological Reflections 17.5 % each (35 points)
Oral presentations: 1) on an experience with a religions tradition other than one's own; 2) final presentation 25% (25 points)
Class participation: 25% (25 points)
Attendance (absences and tardiness will diminish your grade): 15% (15 points)

Assignments which are submitted late will receive a deduction of 2 points per week.

Grades

A – 93-100%
B – 85-92%
C – 77-84%
D – 70-76%

Required Texts

Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982.
Campbell, Ted. **Christian Confessions: A Historical Introduction,** Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
Erickson, Victoria and Farrell, Susan, ed. **Still Believing: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Women Affirm Their Faith..** Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2005.
Kinnamon, Michael. **The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement and How It Has Been Impoverished by Its Friends.** St. Louis: Chalice Press, 203.

Recommended Texts/Bibliography

Gross, Jeffrey, McManus, Eamon, and Riggs, Ann. **Introduction to Ecumenism.** Paulist Press, 1998.

Important Internet Links/Resources

Use Google or some other search engine to investigate “Ecumenism” or a particular faith tradition. Here are some samples:

<http://www.wcc-coe.org/>
<http://www.nccusa.org/>
<http://www.elca.org/>

<http://www.umc.org/>
<http://www.vatican.va/>

Course Organization/Outline

Sunday, June 8

Introduction/Methodology

How did we get from “one” to “so many?”

Do these “provisional” churches have different theologies?

How do churches develop theologies?

Readings:

Campbell: Read entire book

Assignments:

Select a topic for your final paper; begin research.

Choose an “ecumenical effort” in your own faith tradition; do extensive research on its history, its development and its current status; expose its “content” and do an evaluative reflection on the entire enterprise

Or

Choose a major ecumenical “dialogue,” do on its history and its development, expose its “content” and do an evaluative reflection on the entire enterprise.

Or

Do a final reflective synthesis incorporating these elements: What have I learning about ecumenism as a person within my own faith tradition; why is an ecumenical consciousness important to the Church and to the quest for peace and justice within the world; what are my goals in relationship to ecumenism.

Be ready to present this material on June 18th.

Monday, June 9 - Tuesday, June 10

Theological Differences among the “provisional churches”

Readings:

Kinnamon: read entire book.

Wednesday, June 11 - Saturday, June 14

Historical Overview of Christian Ecumenical Movement

Theology of Ecumenism

Principles of Ecumenism

Reception

World Council of Churches

Status of Ecumenical Dialogues

Eastern Churches
Anglican, Lutheran, Roman Catholic Churches
Classical Protestant Churches
Black Churches
Evangelical and Pentecostal Churches

Readings:

Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: read entire book.

Assignments:

Write a three-page reflection on your experience in another religious tradition. What did you learn about yourself? About the other? What else should you pursue in order to better understand and appreciate this other tradition?

Monday June 16

Reflection on “outside” experience due (written and oral)
Future of Ecumenism
Pastoral Issues
Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry

Readings:

Erickson and Farrell: read entire book.

Tuesday, June 17

Interfaith Dialogues
Questions

Wednesday, June 18

Class Presentations
Final Paper Due